

Sheffield Doc | Fest

4 – 9 June 2020

Sheffield Doc/Fest Film Submission Guidelines 2019/2020

WELCOME

Sheffield Doc/Fest is a major film festival and marketplace, celebrating, sharing and debating non-fiction as a collective form of engagement. It is a space for freedom and exploration of the ways in which filmmakers, artists and public may reinvent meaning and new possible worlds.

Doc/Fest is a creative space for discovery, collaboration and inspiration. We champion and push forward talent, ideas and interaction for the future of film and the arts. We are an open, inclusive festival, bringing together veteran creatives, new voices to our city to shape and question the world we live in, creating a sense of community and the potential for change.

In 2019, Doc/Fest welcomed over 28,000 general public admissions, and 3,489 individual industry delegates from 59 countries to Sheffield.

The Sheffield Doc/Fest Film programme offers filmmakers a place for debate, growth and challenge, being also a relevant international platform to launch their films and art works. For audiences, it brings multiple perspectives on our times, and a multitude of forms, ideas, ways of doing and thinking, through World, International, European and UK premieres.

We screen around 200 international films – including features, mid-length and short films. The 2019 programme encompassed works from 50+ countries around the world, 54% of which were directed or co-directed by women.

Below are the guidelines and terms for submission. We anticipate accepting over 2,000 submissions this year so please read through this document carefully to ensure that your submission is eligible.

1. Eligibility Criteria
2. How to Enter
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1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Film Submission Categories:
 - Short Short Films (under 7 minutes including credits)
 - Short Films (7 - 40 minutes including credits)
 - Mid-length / Feature Films (over 40 minutes)
- All films submitted must be a UK premiere at Sheffield Doc/Fest 2020. The film must not be available on any online platform accessible to UK audiences. Eligibility for some of the awards may require international or world premiere status and you will find information on this under Section 5: Awards.
- We welcome multiple submissions. Each submission will require a separate application form and submission fee.
- Films premiered at a film festival or cinema before 30 June 2019 are not eligible for submission.
- Films previously submitted to Doc/Fest are not eligible, unless the film has changed significantly since last submitted.
- Submitted films require English dialogue or English subtitles. Transcripts to films or partial translations cannot be accepted when considering the film for the festival.
- It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to secure clearance from the copyright holders of any copyrighted materials included within the submitted films. Doc/Fest will not be held responsible for the unauthorised inclusion of any copyrighted materials within or related to the submitted film. Doc/Fest reserves the right to disqualify any film with any unauthorised inclusion or copyrighted materials.
- Rough cuts are not recommended and can only be accepted if it is guaranteed that the film will not change in essence on completion and the final cut will be available by 3 May 2020. At the minimum, please aim to send us the picture-lock version of the film.
- If your film project is particularly sensitive, legally or otherwise, and you require an NDA (non-disclosure agreement) or encrypted method of submission, please enquire via films@sheffdocfest.com with 'SENSITIVE PROJECT' in the subject heading.
- Due to the volume of entries received, Doc/Fest cannot offer feedback or individual comments for films not included in the programme.

2. HOW TO ENTER

Films can be submitted through Eventival (https://vp.eventival.eu/sheffdocfest/film_ar_2020). Your film will only be viewed **when the submission form is complete and the submission fee has been paid.**

Please note we are only able to accept submitted films available on Vimeo, Youtube or similar online streaming platforms. We do not accept file transfers, unless a Doc/Fest programmer specifically requests a download version for offline viewing. Please name your screener video the same as the title of your film in your submission form. Screener versions of your film need to be of adequate quality for online viewing such as H264 or MP4 compressions. Remember to provide a direct link to your film and the correct password. If you would like a different cut of your film to be considered it must be resubmitted.

If the password or link changes, please notify films@sheffdocfest.com with the new password. Please read the film guidelines thoroughly before completing the form.

3. PAYMENT AND SUBMISSION FEES:

Early Submissions: 14 October 2019 – 6 December 2019, 23:59 GMT

Mid-Length and Feature Films (over 40 minutes) - £30 + VAT

Short Films (between 7 and 40 minutes) - £20 + VAT

Short Short Films (under 7 minutes) - £10 +VAT

Standard Submissions: 7 December 2019 – 14 February 2020, 23:59 GMT

Mid-Length and Feature Films (over 40 minutes) - £35 + VAT

Short Films (between 7 and 40 minutes) - £25 + VAT

Short Short Films (under 7 minutes) - £15 + VAT

Late Submissions: 15 February 2020 – 2 March 2020, 12:00 GMT

Mid-Length and Feature Films (over 40 minutes) - £45 + VAT

Short Films (between 7 and 40 minutes) - £35 + VAT

Short Short Films (under 7 minutes) - £25 + VAT

The entry fee is non-refundable.

By submitting your project to a UK-based organisation, you agree to the following:

- UK VAT is due on all submissions made by individuals or businesses based in the UK, and on all international submissions made by individuals.

- If you are a business based in an EU country, you do not need to pay UK VAT as this is a reverse charge supply.
- If you are a business based outside the EU, you do not need to pay UK VAT; however, you may be required to account for local VAT in your country.

Submission fees are paid online by credit or debit card only. We reserve the right to change the submission rates.

Discounted Submissions:

- Student productions, film and media schools and tertiary institutions entering more than one film are eligible for a discount. We ask that a representative of the educational institution please contact films@sheffdocfest.com to request a group submission rate. Students are unable to negotiate submission discounts individually. Only graduate films are accepted from a film school/university. Doc/Fest cannot accept documentary exercises.
- Discounts are also available for some [DAC listed ODA recipient countries](#). Filmmakers must reside in a qualifying country and the billing address will be accepted as the country of eligibility.
- We are unable to offer retrospective discounts or reimbursements once a submission has been made.
- We are unable to offer multiple or combined discount rates.

4. SELECTION PROCESS

All films are viewed by members of the Sheffield Doc/Fest previewing team, consisting of industry professionals based around the world. Films are selected by the Senior Programmer in conjunction with the Festival Director and the Film Programming team.

Please note that many of our previewers live or work abroad and therefore the submitter screener may not register as being viewed in the UK.

The primary contact listed in your submission form will be contacted about the status of your entry by mid April 2020. Due to the quantity of applications received, we are unable to offer individual feedback if your application is unsuccessful.

5. AWARDS:

Sheffield Doc/Fest honours the best of our programme in several award categories. Please see the award categories and criteria below.

Grand Award: Films considered for this award are from the Main Competition strand and are required to have their World, International or European premieres at Sheffield Doc/Fest. This award honours films that best display excellence in style, substance and approach to documentary filmmaking.

Jury Award: Films considered for this award are from the Main Competition strand and are required to have their World, International or European at Sheffield Doc/Fest. This award champions bold, new creative forms of non-fiction cinema.

UK Award: Films considered for this award are feature, mid-length or short films from the UK Competition strand. These are required to be World premieres with the main country of production being within the UK.

All films from the main programme that are not part of the Main Competition or UK Competition strands are considered for the following awards:

First Feature Award: This award discovers and honours the future of non-fiction film, celebrating new talent and fresh perspectives.

Short Doc Award: This award presents the best of short films in the Festival, made by emerging and established filmmakers from around the world.

Tim Hetherington Award: This award recognises a film and filmmaker which best reflects journalist Tim Hetherington's legacy.

Youth Jury Award: This award is selected by some of the UK's most passionate and stand-out young documentary lovers.

Audience Award: This award is voted for by the Sheffield Doc/Fest cinema audiences, recognising the film that receives the highest audience vote during the Festival. In memory of Clifford Shaw.

6. FILM SCREENING SCHEDULE

Scheduling of the public screenings is entirely at the discretion of the Festival. As it is a six-day festival, not every film selected will receive more than one screening and priority for multiple screening slots is given to competition nominees and World, International and European premieres. We cannot accommodate screening date or time slot requests. Popular titles, Audience Award and Grand Jury Award winners may be given late-notice additional screenings where slots are available. In the case of a cancelled screening due to technical or venue issues we cannot guarantee a replacement screening.

7. DOC/PLAYER

Titles selected for the Festival's official programme are included in the delegate access digital screening market Doc/Player, unless otherwise indicated on the entry form. Sheffield Doc/Fest's Doc/Player is a fully digitised film library, offering one of the best platforms in the world to promote documentaries seeking sales, distribution and screening opportunities. The Doc/Player is available online to all Doc/Fest pass holders during the Festival and for up to six weeks thereafter. A curated selection of film submissions will be invited to participate in Doc/Fest's Doc/Player. Films that are selected in the programme will be included in the Doc/Player free of charge. For those films not selected in the programme but invited to the platform, a fee will be charged.

8. SCREENING FORMAT

Please note Sheffield Doc/Fest only accepts DCP as a screening format. If you do not have a DCP available we can put you in contact with a professional service who offer a competitively priced DCP mastering service.

35mm and 16mm projection is possible in some venues, in discussion and agreement with the Film Programming team.

In order to reduce the festival's carbon footprint and enable a smoother print traffic service, Doc/Fest uses a digital film delivery platform. We strongly suggest that you use this service for delivering films rather than sending physical drives, wherever possible. All films will initially be subject to a professional quality control check in a DCI-compliant cinema by a trained technician.

It is imperative that we receive films in good time to put them through this checking process, ingest them into the relevant cinema servers and test them on screen.

Deadline for film delivery via online digital platform: 1 May 2020

Along with the DCP we also require a lower quality backup video file.

Further details of how to supply films will be sent upon selection.

Please ensure you retain a master copy of your DCP. Any shipping arrangements made by the filmmaker must include appropriate insurance cover while in transit. Loss of or damage to digital prints in transit (when arranged by Doc/Fest) or whilst in possession of the print handling team, will be insured to the cost of physical formats only; we will reimburse the cost of physical drives carrying DCP up to £150 but will not cover any costs associated with remastering or copying the film. Sheffield Doc/Fest will reimburse the cost of any loss or damage to 35mm or 16mm film prints at the Festival, and associated reprint costs, up to £1,500. The Festival must be notified of any damage to prints or drives within seven days of return delivery date.

9. MARKETING & PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Please ensure that uploaded stills and headshots are of print quality and you that have permission to allow the Festival to use these for promotional and press purposes in perpetuity.

Accepted films will be required to share a H264 trailer and/or press clips by 6 April 2020 to be included on Doc/Fest press and marketing channels. The Festival reserves the right to adapt trailer audio-visual excerpts for the purpose of marketing and promotion. We will also seek permission to use higher resolution clips from a limited number of films in our Festival trailer and press. The Festival will also request delivery of film posters in advance of the Festival.

By applying and participating you agree to unconditional acceptance of these terms and conditions. The organisers reserve the right to change the terms and conditions at any time.

Thank you so much for submitting to Sheffield Doc/Fest 2020!